

Serial No.: 10/032,357

Confirmation No.: 4965

Filed: December 21, 2001

For: METHODS FOR PLANARIZATION OF GROUP VII METAL-CONTAINING SURFACES USING
OXIDIZING GASES

Remarks

The Office Action mailed November 25, 2003 has been received and reviewed. Claims 1, 15-17, and 26-29 having been amended, the pending claims are claims 1-29. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

Support for the amendments to the claims can be found at page 10, lines 25-26 and at page 15, lines 18-26.

The 35 U.S.C. §102 Rejection

The Examiner rejected claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. §102 as being anticipated by Russell et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,395,194). Claim 15 having been amended, this rejection is rendered moot.

Russell et al. do not teach feeding an oxidizing gas into an acidic planarization composition. In contrast, for example Russell et al. generate a gas in situ.

The 35 U.S.C. §103 Rejection

The Examiner rejected claims 1-6, 10-14, 16-19, and 22-26 under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Beitel et al. (U.S. Published Patent Application No. US 2002/0017063 A1). The Examiner also rejected claims 1, 7-9, 16-17, 20-21, and 26-29 under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Russell et al. (U.S. Published Patent Application No. US 2002/0017063 A1), in view of Weast et al., "CRC Handbook of Chemistry and Physics". These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Neither Russell et al. nor Beitel et al. teach or suggest Applicants' invention as claimed. All independent claims have been amended to clarify that the oxidizing gas is not formed in situ; rather the claimed method involves feeding an oxidizing gas into a planarization composition. This does not include generating the gas in the composition. Further, Applicants' planarization composition is acidic. Neither Beitel et al. nor Russell et al. teach or suggest feeding an oxidizing gas into an acidic planarization composition, or the advantages associated

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with such a method. One such advantage is better control of the amount of oxidizing gas incorporated into the planarization composition.

Finally, with respect to the Examiner's statement that Beitel et al. disclose using a fixed abrasive article, Applicants believe that the cited paragraphs (0028-0034, 0037-0041, and 0046-0049) refer to slurry planarization, not planarization with a fixed abrasive article. Clarification is requested.

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Summary

It is respectfully submitted that the pending claims 1-29 are in condition for allowance and notification to that effect is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' Representatives, at the below-listed telephone number, if it is believed that prosecution of this application may be assisted thereby.

Respectfully submitted for
Uhlenbrock et al.

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CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR §1.10:

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The undersigned hereby certifies that the Transmittal Letter and the paper(s) and/or fee(s), as described hereinabove, are being deposited with the United States Postal Service "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" service under 37 CFR §1.10 on the date indicated above and is addressed to the Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Mail Stop AF, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

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